The Opportunity Atlas
Mapping the Childhood Roots of Social Mobility

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Census Scientific Advisory Committee

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Opportunity Atlas

- Comprehensive census tract-level atlas of children's outcomes in adulthood

- Children's earnings distributions, incarcerations rates, and other outcomes in adulthood by parental income, race, and gender

- Users can view data for every census tract in America, overlay their own data, export into a data set for their own analysis

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Data Sources and Sample Definitions

- Data sources: Census data (2000, 2010, ACS) covering U.S. population linked to federal income tax returns from 1989-2015

- Link children to parents based on dependent claiming on tax returns

- Target sample: Children in 1978-83 birth cohorts who were born in the U.S. or are authorized immigrants who came to the U.S. in childhood

- Analysis sample: 20.5 million children, 96% coverage rate of target sample

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Variable Definitions

- Parents' pre-tax household incomes: mean Adjusted Gross Income from 1994-2000, assigning non-filers zeros

- Children's pre-tax incomes measured in 2014-15 (ages 31-37)
  - Non-filers assigned incomes based on W-2's (available since 2005)

- To mitigate lifecycle bias, focus on percentile ranks: rank children relative to others in their birth cohort and parents relative to other parents

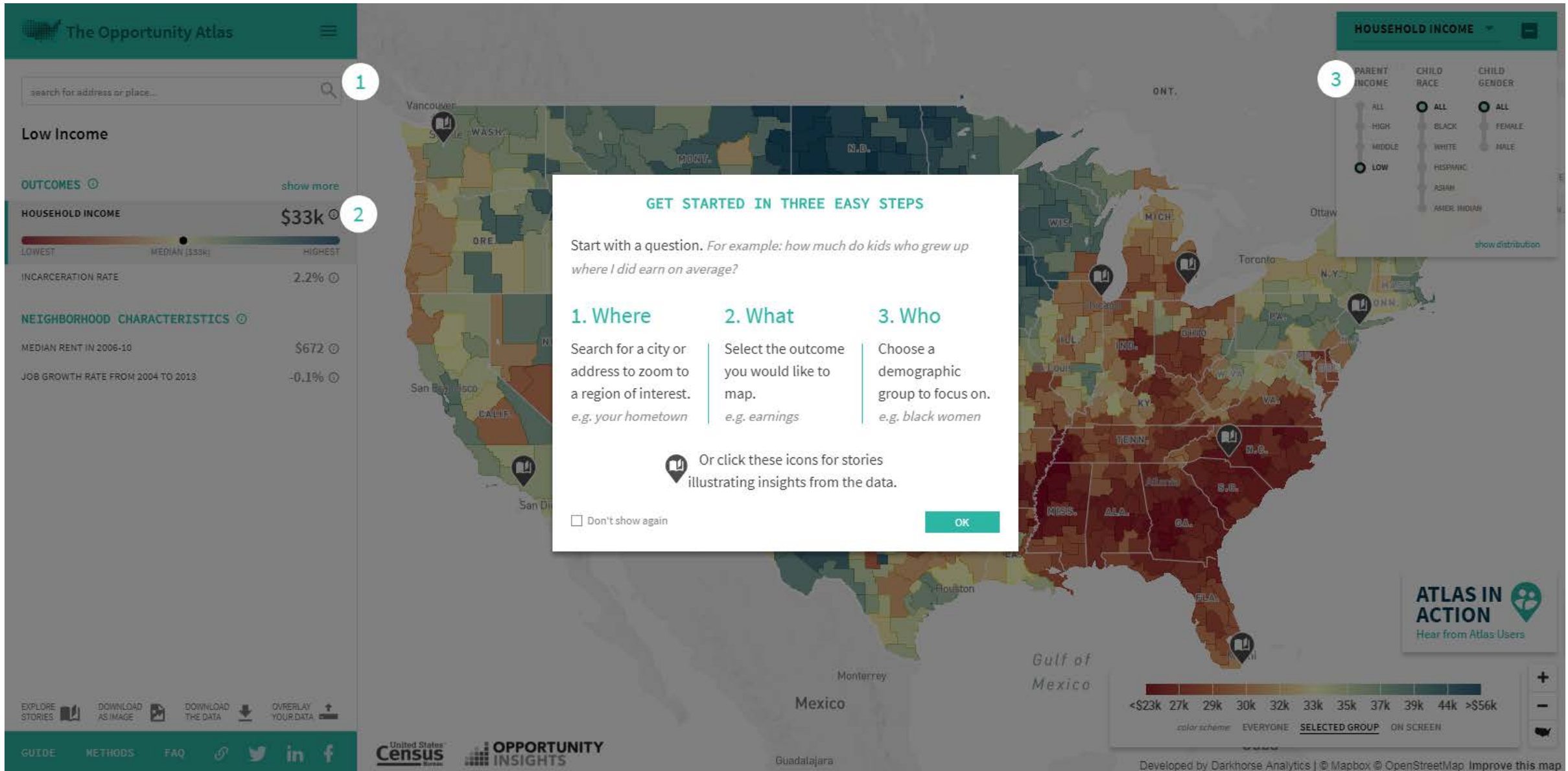- Also examine other outcomes: marriage, teenage birth, incarceration, …

Estimating Mean Outcomes by Tract

- In each tract c, for each race r and gender g, regress children's outcomes on a smooth function of parent rank:

$$y_{icprg} = \alpha_{crg} + \beta_{crg} \times f_{rg}(p_{icrg}) + \varepsilon_{icprg}$$

- In practice, many children move across tracts in childhood

  - Weight children in each tract-level regression by fraction of childhood (up to age 23) spent in that tract

*For additional technical details see Chetty, Hendren, Jones, Porter 2018.

The Opportunity Atlas

HOUSEHOLD INCOME ▼

(1) search for address or place...

(3) PARENT INCOME | CHILD RACE | CHILD GENDER

- ALL
- HIGH
- MIDDLE
- ● LOW

CHILD RACE:
- ● ALL
- BLACK
- WHITE
- HISPANIC
- ASIAN
- AMER. INDIAN

CHILD GENDER:
- ● ALL
- FEMALE
- MALE

show distribution

Low Income

OUTCOMES ⓘ   show more

HOUSEHOLD INCOME $33k ⓘ (2)

LOWEST   MEDIAN ($33k)   HIGHEST

INCARCERATION RATE   2.2% ⓘ

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS ⓘ

MEDIAN RENT IN 2006-10 $672 ⓘ

JOB GROWTH RATE FROM 2004 TO 2013   -0.1% ⓘ

GET STARTED IN THREE EASY STEPS

Start with a question. *For example: how much do kids who grew up where I did earn on average?*

1. Where
Search for a city or address to zoom to a region of interest.
e.g. your hometown

2. What
Select the outcome you would like to map.
e.g. earnings

3. Who
Choose a demographic group to focus on.
e.g. black women

📖 Or click these icons for stories illustrating insights from the data.

☐ Don't show again   **OK**

ATLAS IN ACTION
Hear from Atlas Users

<$23k 27k 29k 30k 32k 33k 35k 37k 39k 44k >$56k
color scheme EVERYONE **SELECTED GROUP** ON SCREEN

EXPLORE STORIES | DOWNLOAD AS IMAGE | DOWNLOAD THE DATA | OVERLAY YOUR DATA

GUIDE   METHODS   FAQ

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OPPORTUNITY INSIGHTS
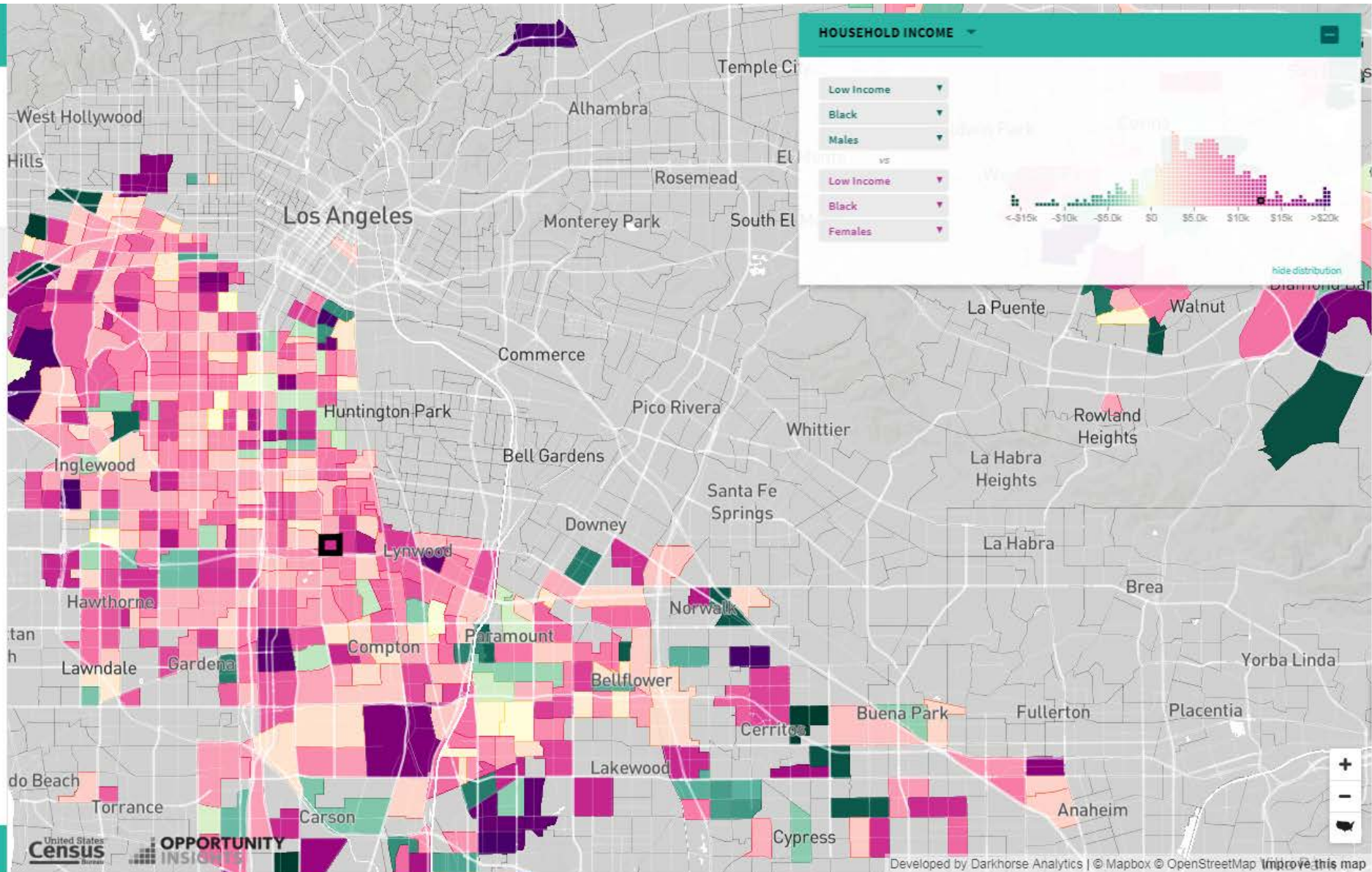
Developed by Darkhorse Analytics | © Mapbox © OpenStreetMap Improve this map

Is Upward Mobility Higher in Cities or Rural Areas?

The Geography of Upward Mobility in the United States
Average Household Income for Children with Parents Earning $27,000 (25th percentile)
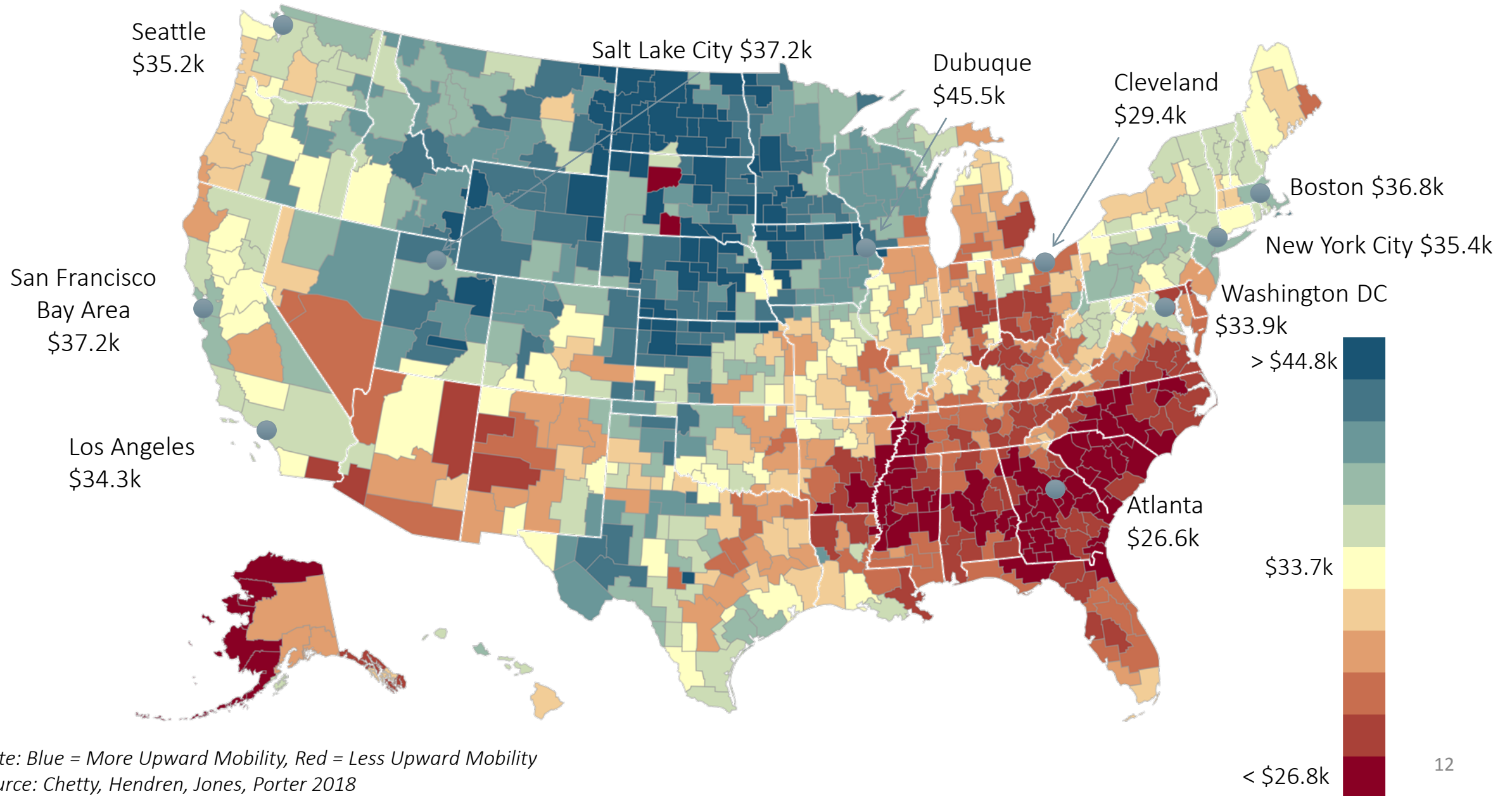
Seattle $35.2k

Salt Lake City $37.2k

Dubuque $45.5k

Cleveland $29.4k

Boston $36.8k

San Francisco Bay Area $37.2k

New York City $35.4k

Washington DC $33.9k

Los Angeles $34.3k

Atlanta $26.6k

> $44.8k

$33.7k

< $26.8k

Note: Blue = More Upward Mobility, Red = Less Upward Mobility
Source: Chetty, Hendren, Jones, Porter 2018

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Incarceration Rates for <u>Black Men</u> in Los Angeles with Parents Earning < $2,200 (1st percentile)

WATTS, Black Men :
Share Incarcerated
on April 1, 2010
= 44.1% (9.3%)

> 50%

30%

<1%

Incarceration Rates for Black Men in Los Angeles with Parents Earning < $2,200 (1st percentile)

WATTS, Black Men :
Share Incarcerated
on April 1, 2010
= 44.1% (9.3%)

COMPTON, Black Men :
Share Incarcerated
on April 1, 2010
= 6.2% (5.0%)

> 50%

30%

<1%
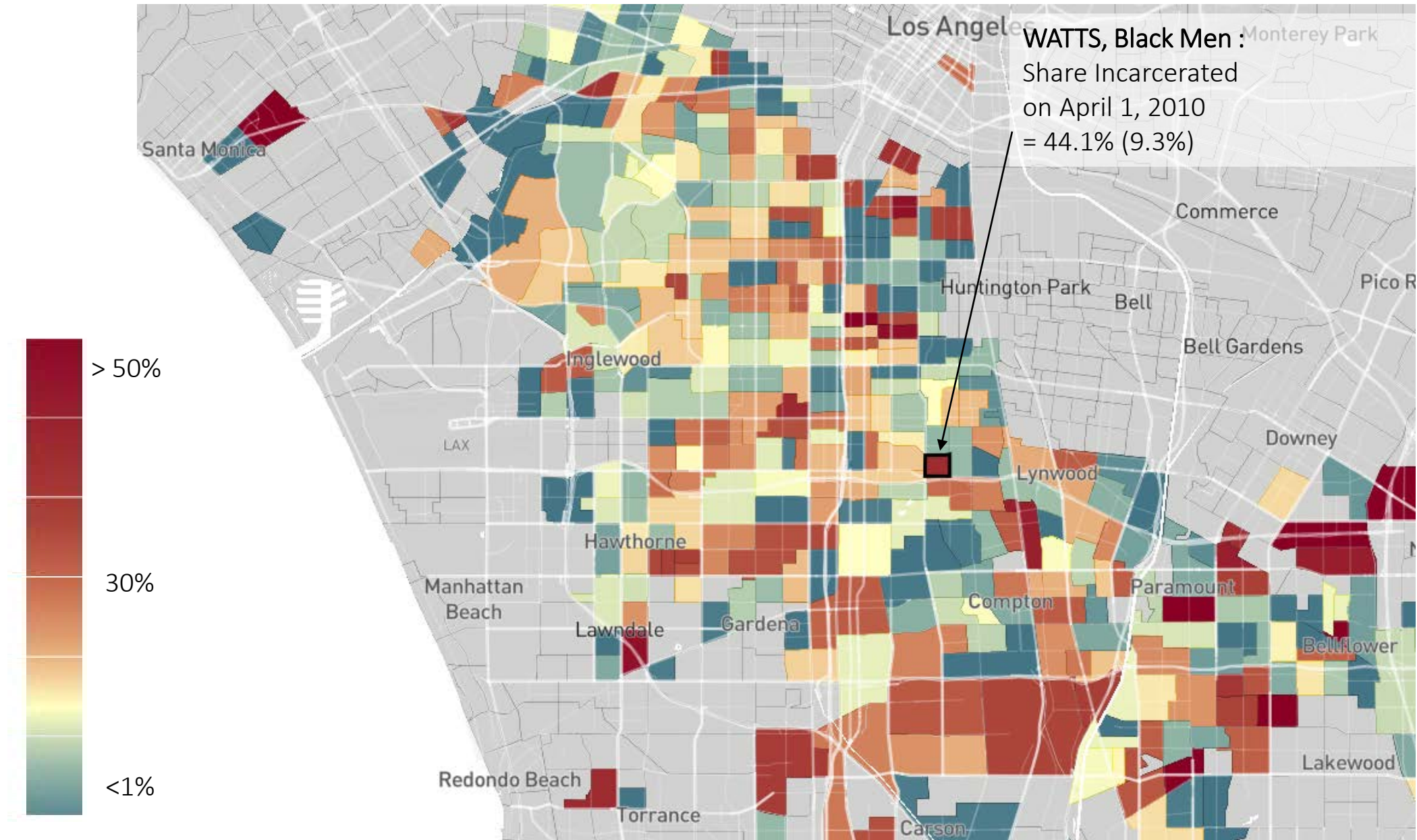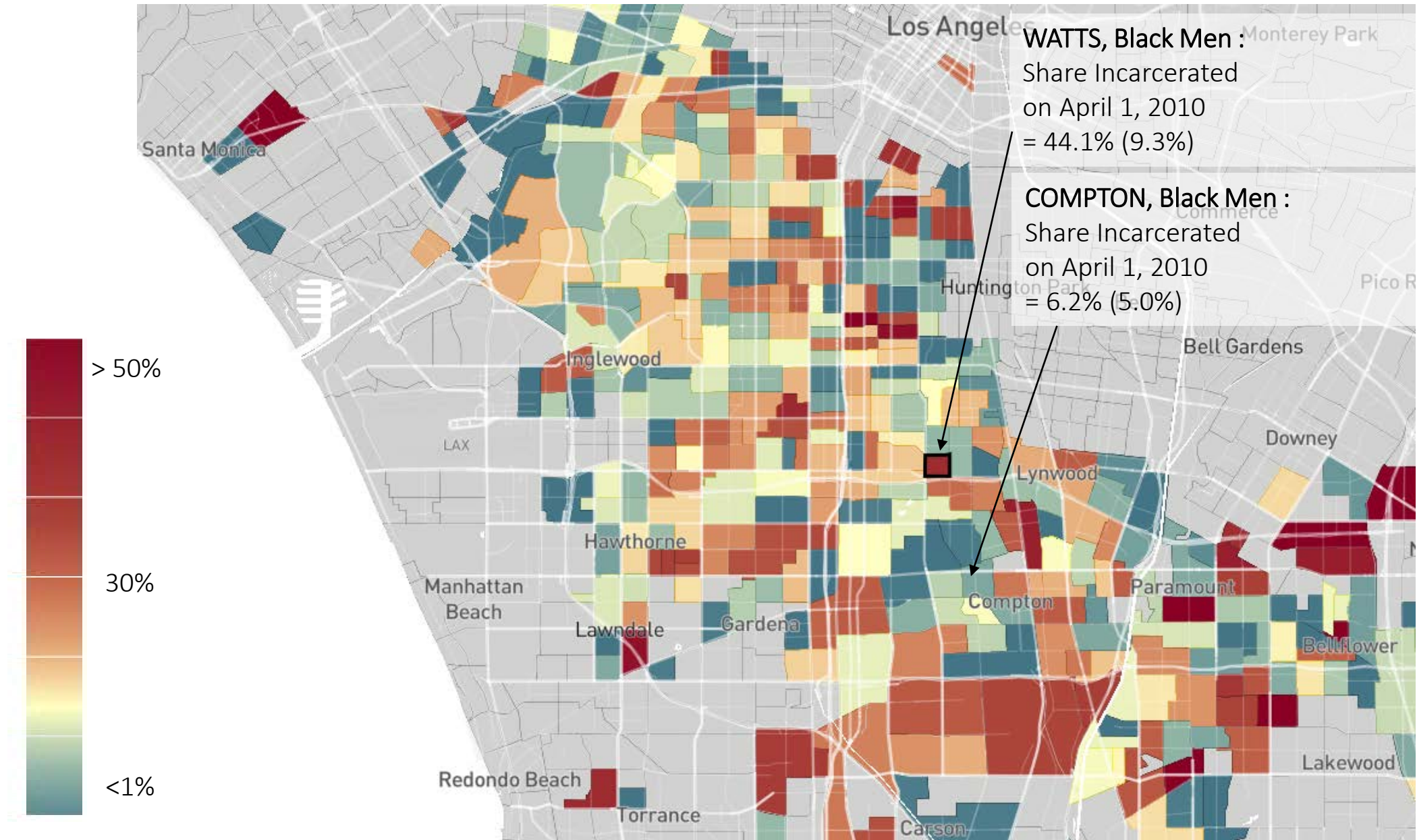
Incarceration Rates for <u>Hispanic Men</u> in Los Angeles with Parents Earning < $2,200 (1st percentile)

WATTS, Hispanic Men :
Share Incarcerated
on April 1, 2010
= 4.5% (2.8%)

COMPTON, **Hispanic** Men :
Share Incarcerated
on April 1, 2010
= 1.4% (0.8%)

> 8%

2.1%

<1%

15
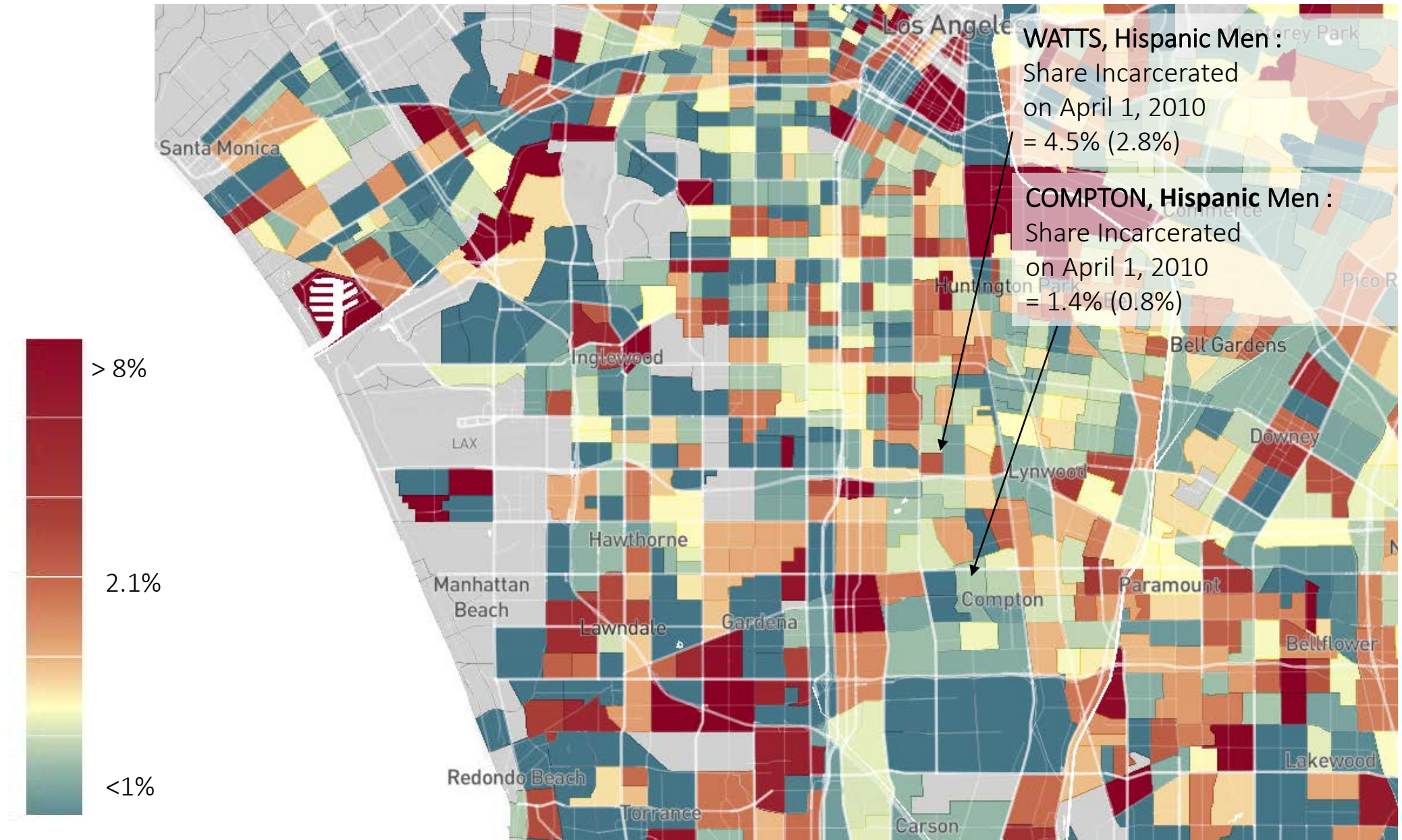
Mean Household Income for <u>Black</u> Men in Los Angeles with Parents Earning $27,000 (25th percentile)

WATTS, Black Men :
Mean Household Income
= $7,286 ($2,576)

COMPTON, Black Men :
Mean Household Income
= $19,141 ($2,149)

> 43.7 ($35k)

31.4 ($22k)

< 15.5 ($4.9k)
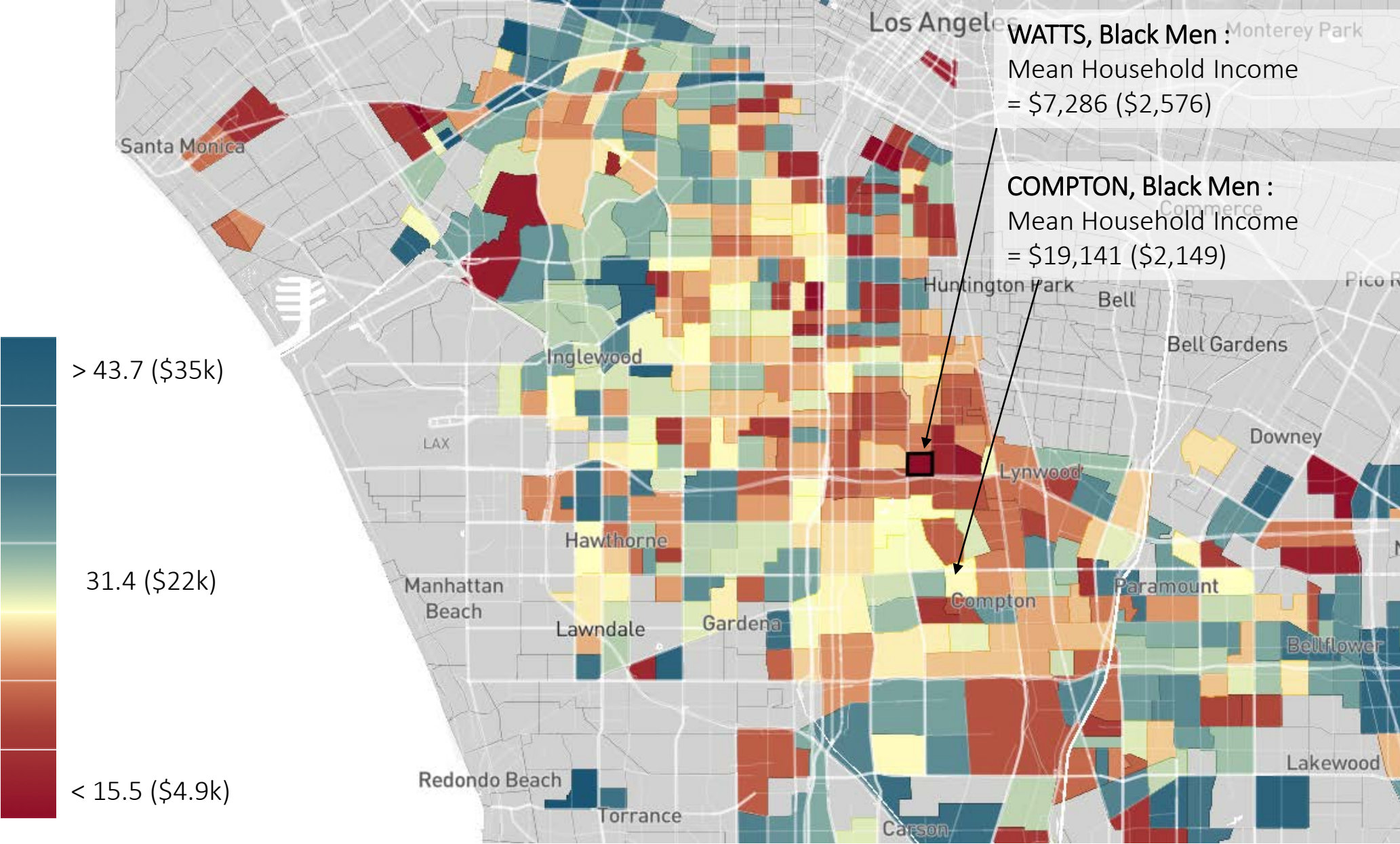
Mean Individual Income for <u>Black Women</u> in Los Angeles with Parents Earning $27,000 (25th percentile)

WATTS, Black Women :
Mean Household Income
= $19,489 ($1,985)

COMPTON, Black Women :
Mean Household Income
= $21,509 ($1,850)

> 44.6 ($36k)

35.2 ($26k)

< 23.4 ($14k)
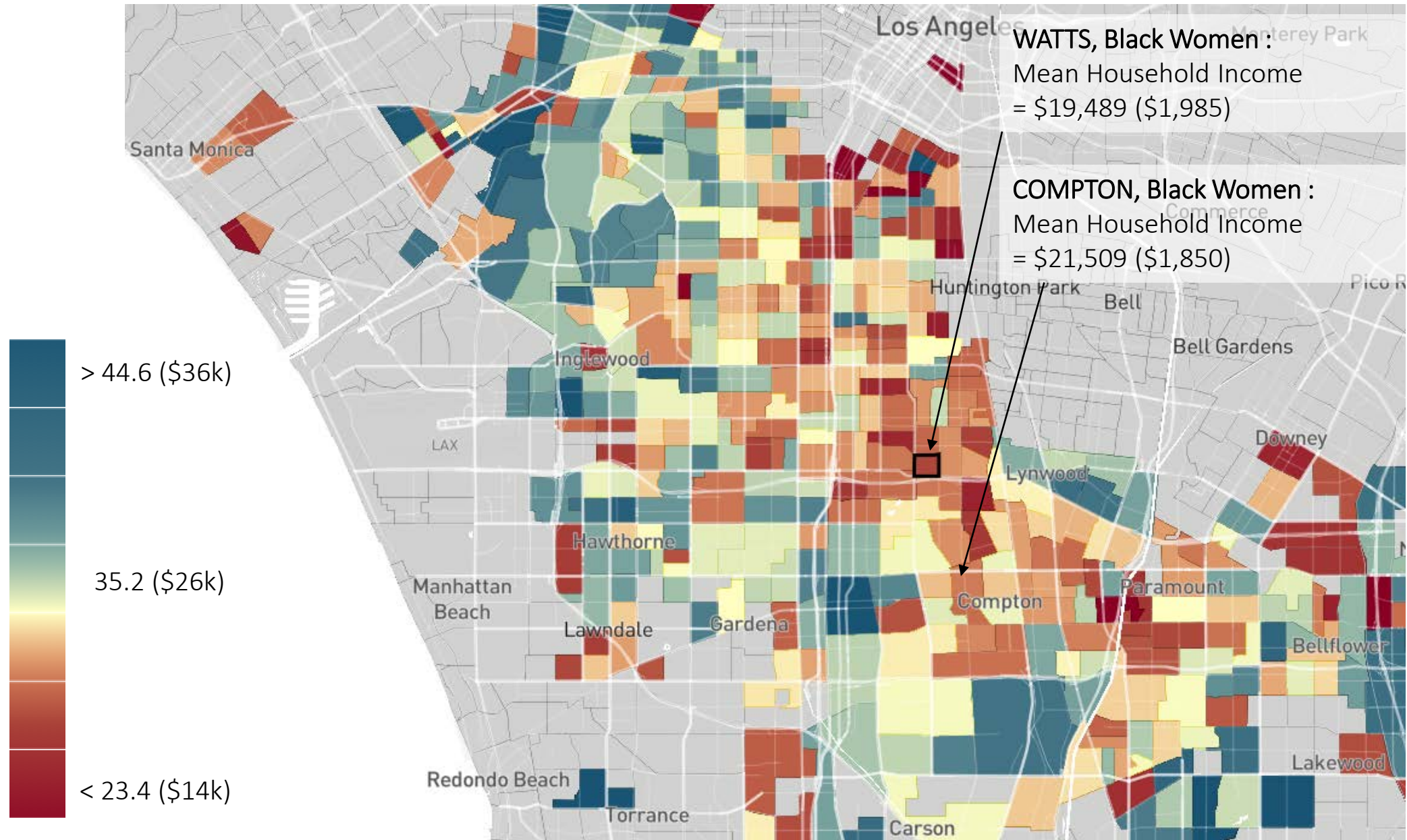
Income Gain from Moving to a Better Neighborhood, by Child's Age at Move

Shoreline

$34K

Seattle
Central
District

$31K

$28K

$25K

Average Income at Age 35

2   8   14   20   28

Age of Child When Parents Move
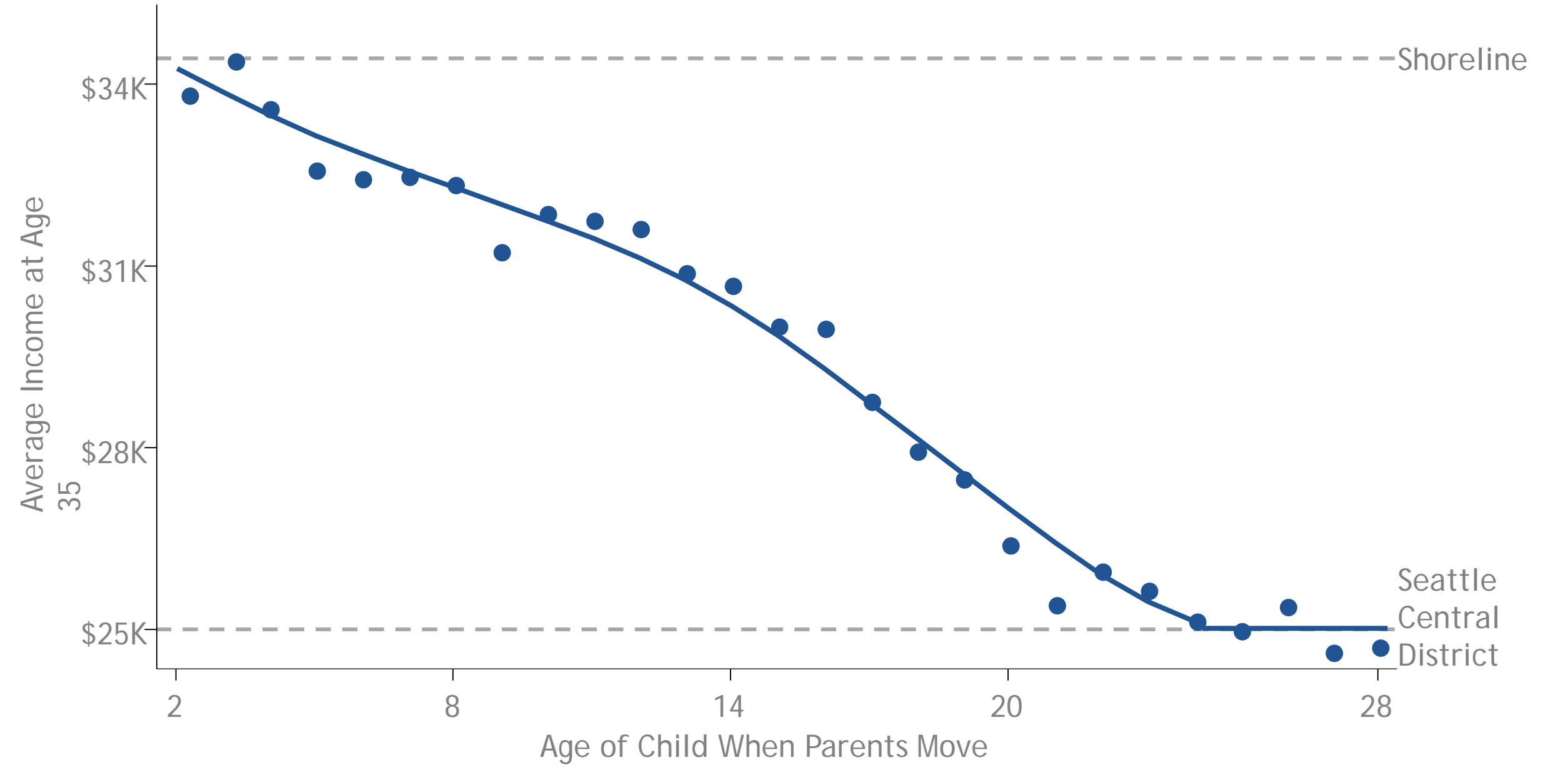
Upward Mobility vs. Job Growth in the 30 Largest Metro Areas

High mobility, low growth

High mobility, high growth

Low mobility, low growth

Low mobility, high growth

San Jose
San Francisco
Boston
Minneapolis
Pittsburgh
New York
Los Angeles
Seattle
Sacramento
Washington
Portland
Houston
Denver
San Diego
Riverside
Philadelphia
Miami
San Antonio
Kansas City
Dallas
Phoenix
Chicago
Cleveland
St. Louis
Cincinnati
Baltimore
Tampa
Detroit
Atlanta
Charlotte

Average Income at Age 35 of Children who Grew up in Low-Income Families

$38K
$34K
$30K
$26K

Job Growth Rate (%) from 1990-2010

0   20   40   60

Conclusions and Future Work

- Children's outcomes vary sharply across neighborhoods, and we can now measure and potentially address these differences with greater precision

- Determine feasibility of adding earlier cohorts starting in 1969

- Add cohorts after 1983 as the data are available

- Assess value of additional data sources

- Continued research on the determinants of intergenerational mobility

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